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THE
DOCTRINE

OF

Salvation, Faith and Good Works,

EXTRACTED

FROM THE

HOMILIES

OF THE

CHURCH of ENGLAND.

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## *To the READER.*

**H**E that desires more perfectly to understand these great Doctrines of Christianity, ought diligently to read the HOLY SCRIPTURES, especially St. Paul's epistles to the ROMANS and the Galatians. And  
“ \* Whosoever giveth his mind to the Holy Scriptures,  
“ with diligent study and burning desire, it cannot be  
“ that he should be left without help. For either God  
“ will send him some godly doctor to teach him, or  
“ God himself, from above, will give light unto his  
“ mind, and teach him those things which are necessary  
“ for him. Man's human and worldly wisdom or  
“ science is not needful to the understanding of scripture; but the Revelation of the Holy Ghost, who  
“ inspireth the true meaning unto them that with humility and diligence search for it.”

\* Homily of Reading the Holy Scriptures.

## Of the Salvation of Mankind.

1. **B**ECAUSE all men are sinners against God, and breakers of his law, therefore can no man by his works be justified and made righteous before God. But every man is constrained to seek for another righteousness, or justification, to be received at God's own hand. And this justification, or righteousness, which we receive of God's mercy, and Christ's merits embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full justification. For the more clear and full understanding hereof, it is our part ever to remember, how that all the world, being wrapt in sin, God sent his only Son into the world, to fulfil the law for us, and by shedding his blood, to make satisfaction to his Father for our sins, to assuage his indignation conceived against us.

2. Inasmuch that infants being baptized, and dying in their infancy, are by this sacrifice washed from their sins. And they who in act or deed sin after their baptism, when they turn again to God unfeignedly, are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins, in such sort that there remaineth not any spot of sin, that shall be imputed to their Damnation. This is that justification or righteousness, which St. Paul speaketh of, when he saith, *Gal. ii. 16. "No man is justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ"* And again, *"We are justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."*

3. The great wisdom of God, in this mystery of our redemption, hath tempered his justice and mercy together. His mercy he sheweth, in delivering us from our captivity, without requiring any ransom to be paid or amends to be made on our parts: which thing by us had been impossible to be done. And whereas it lay not in us to do that, he provided a ransom for us, that was, the precious body and blood of his own Son, who, besides, this ransom, fulfilled the law for us perfectly. And so the justice of God and his mercy embraced together, fulfilled the great mystery of our redemption.



4. Of this justice and mercy of God knit together, speaketh St. Paul, in the third chapter to the Romans. *All have sinned and come short of the glory of God : but are justified freely by his grace, thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ : whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, thro' faith in his blood.* And in the 10th, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth ;* and in the 8th chapter, *that which was impossible by the law, inasmuch as it is weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh : that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.*

5. In these places the apostle toucheth especially three things, which must go together in our justification. Upon God's part, his great mercy and grace ; upon Christ's part, the satisfaction of God's justice, by the offering his body, and shedding his blood, with fulfilling of the law perfectly and thoroughly ; and upon our part, a true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ. So that in our justification there is not only God's mercy and grace, but his justice also. And so the grace of God doth not shut out the righteousness of God in our justification ; but only shutteth out the righteousness of man ; that is to say, the righteousness of our works.

6. And therefore St. Paul declareth nothing on the behalf of man, concerning his justification, but only a true and lively faith, which itself is the gift of God. And yet that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified. But it shutteth them out from the office of justifying. So that altho' they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not all together.

7. Neither doth faith shut out good works, necessarily to be done afterwards, of duty towards God : ( for we are most bounden to serve God, in doing good works, commanded in scripture, all the days of our life.) But we may not do them to this intent, to be justified by doing them. For all the good works we can do, are not able to deserve our justification : but our justification cometh freely of the mere mercy of God : and of so great and free mercy, that whereas all the world was not able to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased him, without any of our deserving, to prepare for



us the most precious jewels of Christ's body and blood whereby our ransom might be paid, the law fulfilled, and his justice satisfied. So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly believe in him. *He for them paid their ransom by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life ; so that now in him, and by him every Christian may be called a fulfiller of the law. Forasmuch as that which their infirmity lacked, Christ's righteousness hath supplied.*

8. Ye have heard, that no man can be justified by his own works, inasmuch as no man fulfilleth the law : And St. Paul in his epistle to the *Galatians*, proveth the same, saying, *If there had been a law given which could have justified, verily righteousness should have been by the law. And again : if righteousness came by the law, then is Christ dead in vain. And to the Ephesians he saith, (chap ii.) By grace are ye saved thro' faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast. And to be short, the sum of all Paul's disputation is this, If righteousness come of works, then it cometh not of grace : and if it come of grace, then it cometh not of works. And to this end tend all the prophets, as St. Peter saith, (Acts x. 43.) To him give all the prophets witness, that thro' his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.*

9. And that we are justified only by this true and lively Faith in Christ, speak all the ancient authors ; especially St. Cyprian, Origin, St. Chrysostom, Hilary, Basil, St. Ambrose and St. Augustin : by which they take away clearly all merit of our works, and wholly ascribe our justification unto Christ only. *This faith the Holy Scripture teacheth us, is the strong rock and foundation of the Christian religion. This doctrine all ancient authors of Christ's church do approve. This doctrine setteth forth the true glory of Christ, and beateth down all vain glory of man. This whosoever denieth, is not to be accounted for a Christian man, nor for a setter forth of Christ's glory ; but for an adversary to Christ and his gospel, and for a setter forth of man's vain glory.*

10. But that this true doctrine of justification by faith may be truly understood, observe, that justification is the office of God only ; and is not a thing which we tender to him, but which we receive of him by his free mercy, thro' the only merits of his beloved Son. And

the true sense of this doctrine, *we are justified freely by faith without works*, or, *we are justified by faith in Christ only*, is not, that this is our own act *to believe in Christ*, or is our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us : ( for that were to account ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue that is within ourselves ) but that altho' we have faith, hope, and charity within us, and do never so many works thereunto ; yet we must renounce the merit of all, of faith, hope, charity, and all other virtues and good works, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as far too weak to deserve our justification : for which therefore we must trust only in God's mercy, and the sacrifice which Christ offered for us on the cross.

11. As then *John Baptist*, as a great and godly a man as he was, yet in this matter of forgiving sin put the people from him, and pointed them to Christ, saying, *Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world* : even so as great and godly a virtue as faith is, it putteth us from itself, and pointeth us to Christ, to have only by him remission of sins or justification. So that our faith, as it were, faith unto us thus : *It is not I that taketh away your sins. It is Christ only, and to him alone I send you for that purpose ; forsaking all your good virtues, words, thoughts, and works, putting your trust in Christ only.*

12. And in truth, neither our faith nor our works do justify us ; that is, deserve remission of our sins : but God himself doth justify us, of his own mercy, thro' the merits of his Son only. Nevertheless, because by faith given us of God, we embrace the promise of God's mercy, and of the remission of our sins ; therefore the scripture saith, *that faith doth justify, faith without works*. And as it is all one to say, *faith without works*, and *only faith doth justify us*, therefore the ancient fathers from time to time speaks thus ; *only faith justifieth us* ; meaning no other than St. Paul means when he saith, *Faith without works justifieth us*. And because this is wrought thro' the only merits of Christ, and not thro' our merits, or thro' the merit or any virtue we have within us, or of any work that comet from us : therefore in that respect, we renounce, as it were again, faith, works, and all other virtues. For our corruption thro' original sin is so great, *that all our faith,*

*faith, charity, words and works, cannot merit or deserve any part of our justification for us. And therefore we thus speak, humbling ourselves to God, and giving to our Saviour Christ all the glory of our justification.*

13. To justify then, is the office of God to man. Our office and duty to God is not to pass our time sinfully or unfruitfully: for this were to serve the devil, and not God. For that faith which bringeth not forth repentance, but either evil works, or no good works, is not a pure and living faith, but a dead and devilish one, as St. Paul and St. James call it. For even the devils believe, *That Christ was born of a virgin: that he wrought all kinds of miracles, declaring himself very God: that for our sakes he suffered a most painful death, to redeem us from death everlasting: that he rose again the third day: that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and at the end of the world shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead.* These articles of our faith the devils believe, and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testament. And yet for all this faith, they be but devils. They remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith.

14. The right and true Christian faith, is not only to believe, that Holy Scripture, and the articles of our faith, are true: but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ; whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments.

15. And this true Christian faith, neither any devil hath, nor yet any man, who in outward profession, in his receiving the sacraments, in going to church, and in all outward appearances, seemeth to be a Christian, and yet in his life sheweth the contrary. For how can a man have this true faith, sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven; and he reconciled to the favour of God, when he denieth Christ in his works? Surely no ungodly man can have this faith and trust in God.

16. If we do truly believe, that whereas we were condemned to hell and death everlasting, God hath given his own Son to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death for our offences, to justify us, and to restore us to life everlasting: if we truly believe that he hath made us his dear children, brethren unto his only Son,  
and



and inheritors with him of his eternal kingdom of heaven; these great and merciful benefits of God will move us to render ourselves unto God wholly with all our hearts, might, and power, to serve in all good works, to seek in all things his glory; evermore dreading to offend in word, thought, or deed, such a merciful God and loving Redeemer. They will also move us, to be ever ready for his sake to give ourselves to our neighbours, and as much as lieth in us, to study with all our endeavour, to do good to every man.— These are the fruits of our faith, to do good, as much as lieth in us, to every man; and above all things, and in all things, to advance the glory of God: to whom be praise and honour, world without end.

#### OF TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

1. **T**HE first coming unto God is through faith, whereby we are justified before God; but lest any man should be deceived, for want of right understanding thereof, it is diligently to be noted, that faith is taken in scripture two ways: there is one faith, which the scripture calleth a dead faith; and this by St. James, is compared to the faith of devils, who *believe and tremble*, and yet do nothing well: and such a faith as this have wicked Christians, who *profess they know God, but in works deny him*.

2. *This faith is, a persuasion that there is a God, and a belief of all the truths contained in his word. So that it consisteth only in believing that the word of God is true. And this is not properly called faith.* But he that readeth *Cæsar's* commentary, tho' he believeth it to be true, yet is not properly said to believe in *Cæsar*, of whom he looketh for no benefit: even so he that believeth all the Bible to be true, and yet liveth ungodly, is not properly said to believe in God: for he hath not such a faith and trust in God, whereby he surely looketh for grace, mercy, and everlasting life at God's hand.— For inasmuch as faith without works is dead, it is not faith, as a dead man is not a man.

3. Another faith there is in scripture, which is not idle or unfruitful, but (as St. Paul declares) *working by love*. And as that is called a dead faith, so this may be called a quick or living faith. *This is not only a belief of the articles of our faith; but also a sure trust and confidence*

*confidence in the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a stedfast hope of all good things at God's hand :* \* a confidence, that tho' we should fall from him by sin, yet if we return to him by true repentance, he will forgive our offences for his Son's sake; and make us inheritors of his everlasting kingdom: that in the mean time he will be our protector and defender, and not withdraw his mercy finally from us, if we commit ourselves wholly unto him, hang only upon him, ready to obey and serve him. This is true, living, Christian faith; which is not in the mouth, and outward profession only, but it liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart: and this faith is not without hope and trust in God, nor without the love of God, and of our neighbour, nor without the fear of God, nor without the desire to hear God's word, and to follow the same, in avoiding evil, and gladly doing all good works.

4. Of this faith, three things are specially to be noted; first, that it is fruitful in bringing forth good works; secondly, that without it can no good works be done; thirdly, what good works this faith doth bring forth.

5. For the *first*, as light cannot be hid, but will shew itself at one place or other: so true faith cannot be hid, but will break out, and shew itself by good works. And as the living body of a man ever exerciseth such things as belong to a living body, for nourishment and preservation of the same; even so the soul that hath a living faith, will be always doing some good work, which shall declare that it is living. Therefore, if any man fancy he is set at liberty from doing good works, it is a manifest token, he hath no true faith; yea, he knoweth not what true faith meaneth. For the true Christian faith is, not only a belief of all the things of God which are contained in Holy Scripture; but also an earnest trust and confidence in God, that he is careful over us, as the father is over the child whom he loveth, and that he will be merciful to us for his Son's sake. And this true faith, when we consider what God hath done for us, is also moved

\* It is the doctrine of the Church of England, to which every Minister of the Church hath subscribed, in subscribing the 35th article that, "without, or before this, can no good work be done."

moved thro' the continual assistance of the Spirit of God to serve and please him, to keep his favour, to fear his displeasure, to continue his obedient children, shewing thankfulness by observing his commandments, and that freely, for true love chiefly, and not for dread of punishment, or love of temporal reward; considering how clearly, without our deservings, we have freely received the mercy and pardon.

Therefore, if it do not appear in our conversation, the faith we pretend to have is but feigned: because true faith is manifestly shewn by good living, and by words also; as *St. Augustin* saith, *Good living cannot be separated from true faith, which worketh by love*: and *St. Chrysostom*, *Faith is full of good works*; and as soon as a man believeth, he shall be adorned with them. How plentiful it is of good works, *St. Paul* teacheth at large in the 11th chapter to the *Hebrews*; evidently declaring, that true faith is no unfruitful thing, but a thing of perfect virtue, of wonderful operation and strength, bringing forth all good motions and good works.

7. Every man therefore must diligently examine himself, whether he hath this faith in his heart or not. He that seeleth his heart set to seek God's honour, and leadeth not his life after his desire, but setteth his mind to serve God for his own sake, and for his sake to love all his neighbours, whether they be friends or adversaries, doing good to every man, (as opportunity serveth, and willingly hurting no man; such a man may well rejoice in God, perceiving by his life, that he hath a living faith. But he that doth not live according to God's words, deceiveth himself, if he think he believeth in him.

8. Let us then by our works declare our faith to be the living, Christian faith: and by such virtues as ought to spring out of faith, *Let us add to, or in our faith, virtue; in our virtue, knowledge; in our knowledge, temperance; in our temperance, patience; in our patience, godliness; in our godliness, brotherly kindness; and in brotherly kindness, charity.*

So shall we both certify our conscience, that we are in the right faith, and also confirm other men. If you feel and perceive such a faith in you, rejoice in it. Let it be daily increasing more and more by good works; so shall you be sure that you shall please God, and when his will is, *receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*



9. The *second* thing that was noted of true faith was, that without it can no good work be done: for as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, faith our Saviour Christ, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine; ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, he bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. And St. Paul proveth that Enoch had faith, because he pleased God; for without faith, faith he, it is impossible to please him.

10. Faith giveth life to the soul; and they are as much dead to God who want faith, as they are to the world, whose bodies want souls. Without faith all we do is but dead before God, be it ever so glorious before man. Even as a picture is but a dead representation of the thing itself; so are the works of those who have not faith before God. They are but shadows of good and living things, and not good and living things indeed: for without faith no work is good before God. We must set no good works before faith. —

Let no man, faith St. *Augustin*, reckon upon his good works before his faith; for where faith was not, good works were not. There is one work in which are all good works, that is, faith which worketh by love. If thou hast this, thou hast the ground of all good works; without this, thou hast only the shadows of them.

11. To the same purpose faith St. *Chrysostom*, 'Many who have not the true faith, yet flourish in works of mercy; but the chief work is lacking, to believe in him whom God hath sent. So soon as a man hath faith, he shall flourish in good works. For faith is full of good works, and nothing is good without faith. They that shine in good works without faith, are like dead men who have goodly and precious tombs. Faith cannot but be naked without good works, for then it is no true faith; and when it is adjoined to works, yet it is above the works. — For as men first have life, and after are nourished; so must our faith in Christ go before, and after be nourished with good works. As life may be without nourishment, but nourishment can't be without life. A man must needs be nourished by good works, but first he must have faith. He that doth good works

\* works, yet without faith, he hath no life. I can  
 \* shew a man that by faith without works lived and  
 \* came to heaven : but without faith never man had  
 \* life. The thief that was hanged when Christ suffer-  
 \* ed did believe only ; and the most merciful God jus-  
 \* tified him. Faith by itself saved him, but works by  
 \* \* themselves never justified any man.

12. The *third* thing to be noted of true faith is, what good works it doth bring forth. And this Christ himself hath plainly declared, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* So that we are taught by Christ's own mouth, that the works of the commandments of God are the true works of faith, the very way that doth lead to life everlasting.

13. Wherefore, as ye have any regard for everlasting life, apply yourselves above all things to read and hear God's word ; mark diligently what his commandments are and with all your endeavour follow the same. First you must have an assured faith in God, and give yourselves wholly unto him ; love him in prosperity and adversity, and dread to offend him evermore. Then for his sake, love all men, friends and foes, because they are his creatures and image, and redeemed by Christ as ye are. Cast in your mind how you may do good unto all men, unto your powers, and hurt none. Obey all your superiors and governors ; serve your masters faithfully and diligently ; disobey not your fathers and mothers, but honour, help, and please them to your power. Oppress not, kill not, beat not, neither slander nor hate any man : but love all men, speak well of all men, help and succour every man as you may, yea even your enemies that hate you, that speak evil of you, and hurt you. Take no man's goods nor covet your neighbour's goods ; but be content with your own and bestow them charitably, as need requireth. Flee all idolatry, witchcraft, perjury ; commit no manner of adultery, fornication, or other unchastity in will or deed, And labouring continually in thus keeping the commandments, which, wrought in faith, God hath ordained to be the path-way unto heaven, you shall not fail to come to that everlasting life, where you shall live in glory and joy with God for ever.

F I N I S.